1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rif MX3

CHAPTER XI

CRISES IN THE LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

128 Sociologists commonly recognize three major crises in the life of each individual: birth, puberty, and death.[1] Besides these major or biological crises they recognize others which lack direct biological importance, but are nevertheless sociologically of interest: naming, circumcision, and marriage. In the Rif, the first haircut should be added to the list and puberty subtracted, since no recognizable rite of passage is used to conduct the adolescent into the state of manhood or of womanhood.

In discussing these crises, my object is not so much to present a detailed picture of the ceremonies which accompany them as to work out a thorough plan of distribution for the various elements in each rite, in order to determine, where possible, the origins and relative antiquity of the various factors.

BIRTH

844 When a woman is considered to be within three days of the expiration of her term of pregnancy, the other women of her household go to the cantonal mosque and there hire a student to make out a charm which will help facilitate the birth. This charm is written, and the writing, soaked off the paper in warm water, is given the mother to drink. Care is taken to see that no knots are tied in the mother's clothing, and she is not allowed to work nor take any strenuous exercise during the last few days of her pregnancy.

On the actual day of the delivery, two midwives take charge of the situation, expelling the men of the family from the room in which the birth is to take place. One of the midwives sits on the floor, and holds the mother in her lap, in a posture half way between sitting and lying, and the mother meanwhile pulls on a rope which has been suspended from the rafters. The woman underneath her grasps her about the abdomen with both hands, helping thus to expel the child.

The Riffians explain the presence of the midwife underneath the mother by saying that it is shameful for a woman to bear a child while lying on the floor, since that is the manner of cattle.

While the mother is hanging by the rope, and the midwife under her is compressing her abdomen, the second midwife busies herself with the details of the actual delivery. When the child has been born, this second midwife cuts its umbilical cord with a pair of scissors, and afterwards goes outside, taking care not to be seen, and buries the afterbirth, the umbilical cord, and the scissors in a hidden place, which she is bound never to reveal, lest some enemy find the remains and with them wreak baleful magic upon the child.

844 554 The midwife who delivers the child and cuts the umbilical cord, and to a lesser extent her assistant, who does the heavier if cruder part of the work, is held in especial esteem by the child in its later life. The child may later even address the midwife as "mother," and

[1] A. M. Tozzer, *Social Origins and Social Continuities* pp. 86–89.

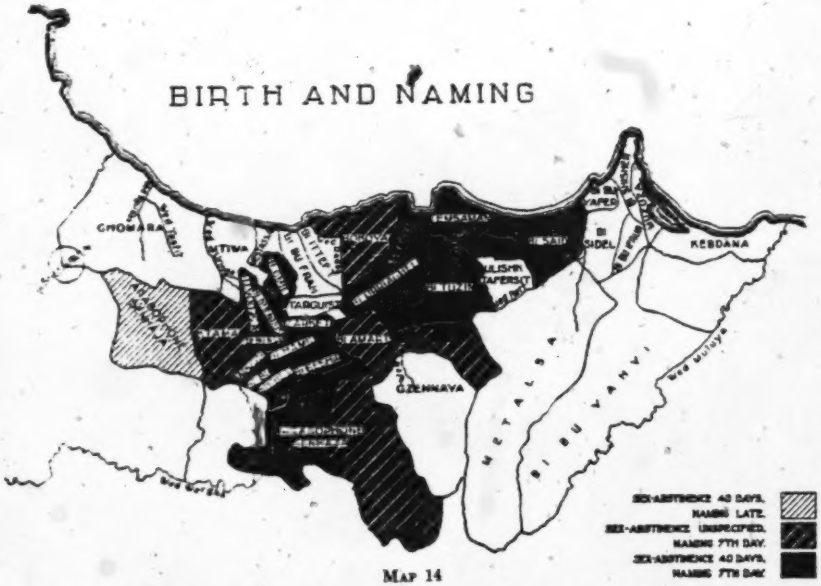
[p122]

1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rd MX3

care for her as he would for his real mother. Midwifery is both an honorable and a charitable profession; midwives are respected by everyone, and receive no fees for their work.

The birth of twins is considered a great felicity.

If the mother is found to lack sufficient milk for suckling her child, another woman, usually of the same *bone*, takes charge of its feeding. The foster-mother is later considered by the child as an alternate mother, and marriage between a child and a foster child of the same woman is considered incestuous and is forbidden.



MAP 14

Let us return to the father, who has been unceremoniously bundled out of the room. When news of the impending birth has been spread abroad, the entire adult population of the *bone* comes to the house, the women going into the actual birth chamber, and the men joining the father in another room or, if the house contain but a single room, in the courtyard.

Before the assembled men, the father sacrifices a sheep or goat, the meat of which is put on the fire to stew. In the meanwhile the father produces a large bowl of *seksu*, which has been awaiting this moment, and the guests eat this with despatch. When they have finished this first course the stew made from the sacrificial animal is served. When this is over the father serves tea.

This meal, which usually is served during the afternoon, suffices until night, when two others are served. These are necessary, because the men sit up all night firing off guns, in

1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rif MX3

844 case the child is masculine, having begun the fusillade at the moment of the delivery, or at the moment when the sex of the child was announced.

The women who come with their husbands bring with them chickens and other articles of food, especially wild greens such as watercress and asparagus, if these be in season. The women install themselves in the room in which the birth has taken place, and prepare nourishing broths for the mother, and for the next week or so continually come in and out looking after her.

[846] 846 On the seventh day the father holds a second celebration, similar to the first, which may be in many cases simply a continuation of it. On this seventh day, the guests, when they have finished drinking tea, each put a silver dollar on the tray; this money is intended as a present to the mother, who may spend it as she pleases.

Among the central Riffians the father is not allowed to have sexual intercourse with his wife until after the expiration of forty days after the birth of the child. During these forty days he avoids her as much as possible, seldom entering the room in which she has borne the child and seldom speaking with her. From economic necessity it is unavoidable that he should see and speak to her to a certain extent, but the tabu is nevertheless kept as rigidly as possible. Among the other tribes there is no fixed limit for the renewal of sexual relations, the matter being entirely personal, and there is no attempt at avoidance subsequent to the actual day of the birth, although the husband in most instances is kept busy outside entertaining the men for the first seven days, and naturally hesitates to enter his wife's room when a large number of women are there. The sex tabu is found in Beni Urriaghel, Temsaman, Beni Tuzin, Beni Said, Iherrushen (except Tarosht, Telmest) Ikhuanen, Iherrassen, Beni Yunes, northern Ulishk, Zarket, Beni Gmil, Beni Bu Nsar, Beni Seddath, Beni Khennus, Taghzuth, Western Arabophone Senhaja, Beni Hamid, and Eastern Arabophone Senhaja.

NAMES AND NAMING

553 The second important event in the life of a child, be it a boy or a girl, is the occasion when it receives a name. Among the central Riffians this takes place on the seventh day, the same day on which the final feast celebrating the birth is held. Among the other tribes it takes place later, but usually before the child is more than a month or two old. Naming is done on the seventh day in[1] Beni Urriaghel, Beni Tuzin, Beni Said, northern Ulishk, Beni Yunes, Ulad Alu ben Aissa, Beni Mohammed, Iherrassen, Ikaroen, Inhanahan, Bured, Temjunt, Iherrushen, Ikhuanen, Beni Amart, Bokoya, Taghzuth, Beni Bu Nsar, Beni Seddath, Beni Khennus, Beni Gmil, Zarket, Beni Hamid, Beni Bu Shibet, Beni Beshir, Ktama, Eastern Arabophone Senhaja, and western Metalsa.

551 A boy child is at this time given a name usually of Arabic derivation and of religious significance, although such is not always the case. The name is frequently a derivative of the root *hmd*, meaning "to praise," of which Mohend, Moh, Bohosh, Haddu, Haddush, Hammush, Mohammadi, Hamidu, Hadi, and Omuah are all more or less Berberized variations. Of these, Mohend and Moh are the equivalents for Mohammed.

[1] According to de Castro, the Galiya and Kebdana likewise hold the naming on the seventh day. This information would serve to date the transition from a seven-day to a three-day custom between the time of de Castro's writing (1911) and the time at which my material was collected. See Fernandez de Castro, *Guelaia y Quebdana*, p. 130.

776 Ramadan, when the jnun are released from their imprison (303/ ment.
789 Some people keep salt in their bags or put a pinch of salt in their written charms to prevent jnun from spoiling their efficacy.

[231] The Ait Waryager strew salt at the place where an animal is going to be slaughtered, if this is to be done after asar, though not otherwise.

[515] [304] Among the Ait Waryager a person who goes to wash himself at the damattihart in the corner of the house which is reserved for this purpose, throws some salt on the ground.

[305] For the same purpose the Ait Waryager keep salt on their lamps.

[784] And a person carrying salt with him is prohibited from coming near a butcher's table, because if he did so no jnun would buy any meat from the butcher (Ulad Bu aziz, Andjra, Ait Waryager).

[307] The jnun shun the smell of tar.

[342 513] The Ait Waryager put tar on the threshold of the house and at the place on the floor where they sleep, as a protection both against jnun and snakes.

Tar is put in the wooden box or earthenware vessel in which money is buried so as to prevent jnun from haunting it and striking the owner when he again digs up his money (Ait Waryager).

The jnun are much afraid of powder, the very smell of which drives them away. The Ait Waryager say that the powder they carry in their bags, like the salt, prevents the money kept there from getting haunted.

[308] The jnun are kept off or driven away by alum, harmel, rue, rosemary, coriander seed, agal-wood, gum-ammoniac, gum-lemon, and benzoin.

●[844] [309] Among the Ait Sadden the room or tent in which a child is born is fumigated with gum-lemon or benzoin, and in Andjra and among the Ait Waryager with benzoin, which is said to be shunned by the jnun but liked by the angels and consequently induces the latter to remain there.

In Fez I was told that they like the smoke of agal-wood as well. It is a common belief in Morocco that the jnun delight in black benzoin (Dukkala, Shawia, Andjra, etc.), whereas opinions differ as regards their attitude to white benzoin. Some people say that they are much afraid of it (Ait Waryager), or that it is liked by certain

262 "In the name of God, God is most great". This may be said before
[264] the breaking of the first egg only (Andjra), or before the breaking of each egg (Ait [363] Waryager).

Among the Ulad Bu'aziz unmarried men and girls refrain from eating the nose of any animal, lest they should have rain at their wedding. Among the same tribe scribes and boys who are studying the Koran must not eat an animal's throat, because the eating of it would make their voices hoarse. Among the Ait Waryager the same part is for a similar reason not given to children to eat. They also prohibit their women from eating the testicles of any male animal, which are eaten by the men; and they believe that if a child ate the kidney of an animal it would come out as lumps on the face and body of the child.

[364] A man who has killed an edible wild animal or bird eats its head in order to be successful in hunting (Ait Waryager, Temsaman), or he eats, for the same reason, both the head and the heart, though he may share them with his wife and children.

224 [365] Various customs relating to hunting, target-practice, and
689 guns have been mentioned in earlier chapters, but others may be added.

Among the Ulad Bu'aziz in Dukkala, if one of the hunters misbehaves, the others draw round him a circle, a so-called gart r-rma, and he has to remain inside it until he pays a fine (haqq or d'aira), after which the hunters surround him and make fatha. An offence which makes a hunter subject to this treatment on the evening after the hunt is the shooting or killing of a hare which is asleep, in which case he will have to give a feast to his companions; for both in Dukkala and elsewhere (Ait Waryager) a hunter must not kill a sleeping hare because it deprives his companions and the grayhounds of the pleasure of hunting it.

[369] Among the Ait Waryager, if one of the rrma has misbehaved, the others punish him when they are shooting at targets by filling the hood of his cloak with stones and compelling him to sit at a distance from them; and they do not remove the stones and admit him to their company until he has repeated the prayer for the Prophet a certain number of times, fifty or a hundred or more, according to their discretion.

• 844 [370] When a woman is going to give birth to a child, or if her delivery proves difficult, certain practices are often resorted to in order to facilitate it.

844 [372] Among the Ait Waryager, before a woman gives birth to a child, the fqi of the village writes something from the Koran in a bowl, and water is poured over the writing and then given to the woman to drink. This is likewise supposed to facilitate the delivery.

[373] Among the Ait Waryager the after-birth (adan) and navel-string (dmit) are buried at the bottom of the dunghill of the house to prevent their being walked over.

[376] Among the Ait Waryager the mother is [377] immediately on her delivery given a dish of eggs and butter or oil to partake of, and after that the gravy of a fowl. Pieces of thin cakes, eggs, and butter are mixed together in an earthenware pot (dahabbit), which is placed on the head of a boy—a brother of the newborn child if there is one, otherwise a neighbour's son. The other children of the house and the women who are present eat from this pot on the boy's head; I was told that should they not do so something bad would happen to the child.

[378] Among the Ait Waryager, when a boy is born, the father puts into his right hand a knife (dahadmit) to make him a man, and when a girl is born he puts into her right hand a foot of a fowl to make her a good housewife; but the knife may also be a charm against the jnun.

[380] In Andjra and among the Ait Waryager the room of the lying-in woman is likewise fumigated with benzoin, which is said to be shunned by the jnun but liked by the angels, who are consequently induced to remain there.

[384] The Ait Waryager have the custom of smearing henna on the top of the child's head on the day after its birth, "to make the head strong".

[387] In some places the child is referred to as the son or daughter of its father (Tangier, Andjra, Ait Waryager, Amanuz and other people of Sus), and in other places as the son or daughter of its mother.

846 852 553 [391] Among the Ait Waryager the mother generally gets up on the third day, but keeps to the house till the seventh day, when she washes, fumigates herself with benzoin, and paints her hands and feet with henna, her eyes with antimony, and her teeth with walnut root. She also combs and oils her hair, puts a long silk scarf (rahzam) round her head, and dresses herself in her best clothes. On this day there is the ceremony of name-giving. The father kills a sheep or a

the Berber. Of the various steps that one passes through, domestic celebrations of any magnitude occur only with the naming of the child and marriage. Birth itself, first haircut, circumcision and death are attended by very unelaborate ceremonies.

The ceremonial activities surrounding birth are rather insignificant. When the woman is on the point of delivery she sends for the neighborhood women and for a midwife. Relatives may come and often do although they are not required to. Coon (1931:123) states that on this day a sheep or goat is sacrificed. While wealthier families may offer an animal to feed the assembled guests, it is not ritually incumbent upon them to do so. However, the occasion of the birth of a male child, especially a first-born boy, is one of great joy and such hospitality is not uncommon among those who can afford it.

Coon may have been confusing the birth with the naming ceremony, which occurs seven days later and which is socially the second most important initiation ceremony in the society. On this day the father invites all the brothers and sisters of his wife as well as his own siblings. This is a time during which familial solidarity is required and all close kin of the child on both his mother's and father's sides are expected to be present and to offer gifts. The amount of gift is not fixed but is determined by the economic level of the giver and by previous obligations established by gifts that the giver has received from the parents. These presents include a small amount of money, 20 to 50 kilos of barley flour, a dozen loaves of bread, several